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ABSTRACT

Excerpts from the addresses of 14 symposium contributors are presented. Relevant to the theme "Reading and the Individual," the necessity for encouraging creativity in learning and in teaching was stressed in three articles, and the threat to the individual's freedoms posed by today's society was discussed in one article. Creativity in writing and language use was particularly encouraged. Ways of using the everyday experiences and current interests of young people to stimulate intellectual inquiry and language activity are described in another article. Various instructional programs and activities are described, including bibliotherapy, a simplified phonemic alphabet, creative pupil construction, physical training, vocabulary enrichment, and basal readers in grade 1. Proposals for the role of reading specialists, reading centers, and reading committees in each school were suggested as the directions the field will take toward improved reading instruction in the coming decade. (CM)

READING AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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PREFATORY NOTE

Reading and the Individual is one in a series of annual reports of the proceedings of the annual reading symposium held in March, 1970, at Indiana University, Fort Wayne. Included are excerpts from the addresses of the featured speakers as well as from selected talks by leaders of supplementary sessions. Speakers who submitted manuscripts for publication are to be commended on their scholarship and their service to the symposium.

Dr. Helen Clara Lee, Editor
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Indiana University, Fort Wayne

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Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz, Professor of Education, Newark State University, is the principal author of the i/t/a materials used in the Bethlehem Studies and published for use in the United States. Dr. Mazurkiewicz is the chairman of the Education Department at Newark State University.

Reading and the Individual

Imagine if you will a four-picture sequence which shows a skier on a mountain top, the skier coming down the mountain toward some trees, the skier about to crash into one of the trees and, in the last picture, ski tracks around either side of the tree, continuing into the distance. One first grade child attempted to account for this unusual circumstance in a written story. Her title was "The Super Skier."

> It was winter time. The super skier wanted to go skiing. So he chose the steepest hill on which to go skiing. And he was skiing so fast that when he came to some trees he knew he was going to crash into one of them. So he splitted himself into two parts, and the left side of his body went around the right side of the tree, and the right side of his body went around the left side of the tree. And when the two parts got on the other side of the tree, they joined up. Only now the right side of his body was on his left side and the left side of his body was on his right side. And he went thru life that way. But it didn't cause any problems because he lived with his parents.

This story embodies outcomes we strive for as we talk of reading and the individual. We note the child's creativity; we get insight into her thinking and experience; we observe her use of language at that point in her development; we observe her understanding of the adult world; we note her imaginative solution to a problem.

Few reading programs are structured to move the child confidently through learning experiences to behavioral objectives. Few reading programs are based on the needs of the individual or take cognizance of the child at all. Most are based on assumptions irrelevant or wholly wrong. School districts who use a basal series as their total reading program provide a straitjacket for the child with a series of activities which turn the child off. Adults are primarily responsible for the communication gap between generations, which begins in early childhood; and they perpetuate the gap through later educational years. Teachers misinform the child and deny him learning opportunities which do not suit adult convenience.

Take, for example, the question of reading before grade one. The arguments for and against teaching children to read before grade one have generally been specious, often based on ignorance of the child. Opponents of pre-first-grade teaching have had expert company to support their rationalizations. But a close analysis of this expertise shows undeviating positions based on obsolete data which are often only opinion.

The teacher has had difficulty determining her attitude about teaching the child to read at age five or earlier. "If the experts are in disagreement, dare I take a stand?" might well have been her argument. Being conservative by training, she insists, "Let's not deprive the child of his childhood." What the accomplishment of learning to read has to do with depriving the child of his childhood is difficult to see unless we suppose that reading is a skill reserved for adults, or perhaps adolescents. From earliest times,reading has been taught to children, at mother's knee, in the Dame School, and in today's multi-media establishment, so this red herring-type argument has no validity. But a large number of teachers and supervisors believe it.

Since educators admit that schools and education exist for the benefit of the child, arguments about pre-first grade reading must be resolved by examining the child's needs and development, not by attending to adult needs and convenience. Many home and school structures are geared to the convenience and needs of adults. We know that five or six small meals per day are more desirable for the well-being of the human than the traditional "three good meals;" but what a nuisance three meals a day are, let alone five or six for the mother who must prepare them! Thus, meals three times a day at times convenient to adults become the rule.

Elementary school buildings are most often built, not for children surely, else the door handles would be at child height. Curriculum is dictated by the adult-written books that school systems have purchased, not by the professionals who live with, and therefore, study the needs and interests of children in relation to community purposes. Forget adult needs, assumptions and convenience and examine the average growing child's behavior as he imitates his environment. He indicates literacy hunger at age three or four, not five, six or eight, and when the child is hungry, he should be fed. How can we refuse to feed his literacy hunger at the earliest point possible in school? Furthermore, how can we deny the parent the support he needs in providing the child with literacy skills prior to formal schooling. No valid arguments support our present behavior except those based on assumption and convenience. Contrary-wise data support a child development approach to timing the attack on literacy hunger.

Looking farther back at the developing child, we can project the elements of a reading-writing program specifically related to his characteristics and thus make rational recommendations to parents and teachers. The development of the child is a struggle for independence. We see this characteristic as early as the child can sit up in a high chair to be fed. It's visible in the child's desire to hold the spoon and feed himself. Though the food goes everywhere but into his mouth, we allow the child to feed himself while we also feed him.

This same struggle for independence appears later when the child begins to walk. Fathers encourage their children in various ways; the child holds onto father's thumbs while being led to take first steps or stand by himself. But as soon as the child becomes confident that his low center of gravity will bring him to a soft landing, he dares to take his first faltering steps, and shortly thereafter he's off and running.

Reading-writing programs are suggested by this behavior. The beginning school program must bring about independence of the adult as quickly and easily as possible. The three-year stretchout program of decoding in traditional basals is not the answer, since it has been a program which prevents and delays independence. The look-say beginning and fractionated phonics with a delay of vowels establishes a program of guessing and dependence on the teacher for the next word. A strong decoding program, on the other hand,

based on grapheme-phoneme correspondence of high utility in writing-reading most nearly coincides with traditional orthography, since independence in decoding and encoding is structured and fostered.

Furthermore the perceptual decentration theory of Piaget, currently not disproved by a variety of researchers, is a rational psychological basis for acceptance of a strong decoding program. The average child of three or four appears most often to center his perception on the elements within a word and decenters in time, aged 8 or so, to the fields of configuration and upper-coast line.

Program structure must be based on the child's motivation on entering school. It must also be based on need while the child is at home. Thus the argument resolves itself. At what age should we teach children to read and write? At that age when literacy hunger is exhibited. Do all children exhibit literacy hunger at the same time? Obviously not! Thus, some may begin to learn to read at three, others at four, five or six.

Reading and writing in nursery school or kindergarten? Well, of course! But not with all children. Should parents teach their children to read and write prior to school if literacy hunger exists? Certainly! And be commended for saving the teacher's valuable time, time which the teacher can devote to those children who need her professional skill and expertise, those whose hunger for literacy needs to be awakened.

The English language is a graceful rogue--a powerful, wayward thing. Mean-tempered, it does not submit easily to the uses of men. Though it may grow and shine, it is feared as much as loved. But some men and women have it in their nature to make it behave. Teachers and supervisors who've given impetus to change can be numbered among these. In all progress the next step beyond established knowledge is in the dark. One or a few with cat's eyes must see the trail and take it, and, in the taking, inch the light of knowledge forward. It's a difficult task which the faint-hearted avoid, waiting until the trail is lighter.

Such ideas as i.t.a., integrating language arts or beginning the reading program with language experience support a kind of language development that is new and different, if we make use of the opportunity these procedures offer and fit them into the conceptual framework they need. We have implications thus far, given certain circumstances, among them rich and lively language opportunities,

that we create intelligence. In working with revised curricula in the language arts, past the beginning stages of these procedures, the existing elementary curriculum is markedly changed,and its use with children helps create different products. Today's children are hard to handle because they are independent learners, and they know it. Knowledge of these children's strengths guides teachers to provide opportunities to develop an open-ended language program. Routine developmental reading materials fail to help children exploit their language skills. The child and his needs are the key to a useful reading program.

Misinformation is found in instructional materials which phonic generalizations. Many such materials teach the child that in words where one consonant is found between two vowels, the consonant goes with the second vowel. Thus the word is syllabicated for breaking words at the end of lines. Teachers then are told, and tell children, that the first vowel is found to be in an open syllable (la-dy) and that vowels in open syllables are usually long. Unfortunately the statement itself is false, since vowels in open syllables are usually short. Is it any wonder that the child turns us off when we teach him information which has no useful application to word recognition?

Fortunately the child's mind proceeds more logically than the adult's, and he learns what he needs to learn to use his language. But his reading grade is based on his correct behavior toward his teacher, and the child learns not to question his teacher or the validity of his texts if he wants to succeed. However, he forms his own private and more useful generalizations, learning to read despite inadequate instruction. This example is only one of many. The old standby, "When two vowels go walking, the first does the talking," has less than 70% utility,and the vowel pair ui under this generalization has zero utility.

All teachers must understand how reading as a cognitive process is akin to thinking, and reading must be taught so versatility becomes reality. All are agreed that the versatile reader knows how to adapt rate of reading to purpose for reading and to the nature and difficulty of the material. But this is one objective that has received largely lip service. The critical and creative reader knows why he is reading, what he is reading, how to adjust his rate of reading, and what he expects to attain; yet classroom practices, saddled by outmoded and ill-conceived directed reading activities presented and represented by

stereotyped basic reader programs, violate these principles. Children can think. They can read critically and reflectively at all levels, if they are taught to do so. In the all-too-typical schools, the minimal, parrot-like demands placed upon children deprive them of the opportunity to think.

Creative, successful people have several characteristics in common:

1. A childhood environment in which knowledge and intellectual effort were so highly valued for themselves that an addiction to reading and study was firmly established at an early age.
2. An unusual degree of independence which, among other things, led them to discover early that they could satisfy their curiosity by personal effort.
3. An early dependence on personal resources and on the necessity to think for themselves.
4. An extensive drive that generated concentrated, persistent, time-ignoring efforts in their studies and work.

All of these characteristics seem also to be generated in reading-language arts programs where a rationality of procedure exists, where encouragement to develop independence is given, and where language serves as the central focus about which the curriculum is integrated. This kind of integrated program gives many children an investment in success, new attitudes, and the intelligence and capacity to deal easily with the written word. These significantly affect the child as he moves into the educational adventure.

Decoding, early and continuous in a spiraling structure, not necessarily prescribed in a given basal, but pupil-need directed, must be the way for reading instruction. To continue reading development, pupils must study formational, structural and generative grammars to bring to conscious awareness that right and wrong language matters are not absolute, that language changes, especially in its sounds, that observing conventions of language improves communication, and that language rules are descriptions of what happens in language.

Teachers must provide circumstances where the individual can have a love affair with reality that is exuberant and open-ended. He should be part of as much as he can be a part of, attending seriously to his own thoughts and

feelings, learning to express them in his own way through the arts of language.

Teachers must emphasize a method of inquiry in which the learner searches out his problems and tests his best expectations for solutions, reporting to himself and others as fully as he can what he finds out and what difference his new understandings make in his life.

Teachers must continue present systems in which a child observes, compares, reports, classifies, summarizes, and interprets matters of import, particularly his own values, all toward the end of learning to think critically. These activities are not necessarily related to reading and can and should be developed in the absence of print. Teachers must fill school days with lively conversations with books that are used as a way out of the immediate present or as a way of finding out what is on record. This heritage of literature must be taught lovingly, creatively, and inspiringly rather than by the sadistic dissection all too commonly practiced. There is a need for a drastic overhaul of thinking and practice if reading is to be related to the individual.

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Dr. Jack Humphrey, Director of Reading Programs, Evansville Public Schools, is the organization chairman for the International Reading Association. Dr. Humphrey is presently associated with the Indiana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development as its president.

Reading in the 1970's

Times are changing, and reading programs must serve the needs of children in the decade ahead. Changes that directly influence the school reading program can undergird a plan to meet the challenges of the 1970's.

Negotiations between teachers and school boards have reduced class size so that children get individual attention in class. Increased salaries resulting from negotiations attract excellent teachers to the profession. At the same time, however, there has not been a corresponding increase in the income of public schools. Costs of materials are going up each year; yet, many citizens resist increased taxes. Thus an increased proportion of the school budget is going into classroom-related areas without a proportional increase in revenue. The net result is less money for supervision, remedial teachers, clinicians, librarians, reading materials, and related areas. Another result is the increased responsibility for the classroom teacher, since fewer resources outside the classroom aid her.

The 1960's brought abundant new materials. Phonic records, sight cards, skill books, workbooks, and supplementary readers were bought with federal and increased local support. This abundance brought logistical and organizational problems never before experienced in our schools. Today, a real problem is to get the right materials to the right teacher for the right child at the right time.

Abundance of new materials, complex reading problems of today's children, and sophistication needed by reading teachers make it difficult for new people to take over existing programs. Consequently in-service training, curriculum guides, graduate reading programs, and other professional programs must keep teachers abreast of changing times in reading instruction.

Commissioner Allen's "Right to Read" emphasis, national assessment, and "labor-management" developments have brought about problems for principals. School boards talk of giving more responsibility to principals and holding them accountable for reading progress of pupils. It looks as if more pressure will be placed on schools to produce better readers, and, since ancillary personnel and materials may be reduced, pressure will be placed on school personnel to organize efficiently so that school resources may be marshalled.

Proposal 1. The position of reading specialist should becreated for all schools--elementary, middle, junior high, or senior high. This person would receive no more pay than any other teacher nor should secretaries, aides, or other such support be necessary. Someone who cares about children and is knowledgeable about teaching reading should be appointed.

Some schools now have a qualified person. Such a person is hard to recruit. Rather, a person now on the staff could be worked into this leadership role. A person just beginning his teaching career should not be given the assignment. Rather, a dedicated, sincere, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, highly motivated teacher is needed. A reading specialist's license does not guarantee that a person can perform this task to satisfaction, but a person without this license who is assigned the job should work towards certification within reasonable time.

The reading specialist should be assigned as many periods of reading as possible. In a high school with five periods each day, the teacher should teach as much developmental and remedial reading as the schedule allows. In a K-8 elementary school with seven teaching periods per day, the specialist might teach two sections each of grades six, seven, and eight and have one period for children with special reading problems. This concentration of reading instruction would cut down coordination and other problems occurring when many teachers teach one period of reading per day each. The reading specialist would be expected to work with new teachers, select materials to help teachers, and to do other leadership tasks outlined below.

Proposal 2. A reading center should be established in each school in a regular classroom where materials and equipment would be available not only for the reading specialist but also for all teachers in the school. Most schools contain an abundance of materials, but they are not organized so that all people can get to them. Teachers are

reluctant to go into other classrooms to remove materials, but they would be able to see and use materials in the school reading center. Any teacher who had children with special problems could consult the school reading specialist about methods and materials.

Some of the materials for a school reading center are listed below. Many items now in schools could be pulled together in one room. Other items could be bought with reading order funds. School money could be used on this room for several years until a satisfactory program was developed.

Equipment:

Controlled reader and films	Overhead projector
Tape recorder	Listening center (headsets)
Film strip machine	Filing cabinet
Shelving	

Materials:

SRA Reading Laboratories for grades 5 or 6-8

Adopted reading books	Co-basal readers, Open Highways
Paperback books for wide reading	
High interest, low readability books	
Encyclopedias and dictionaries	

Non-consumable materials:

Readers Digest 1-8	New Practice Readers A-F
McCall Harby	McCall Crabbs A-E
Reading for Meaning 4-12	Using the Context
Working With Sounds	Following Directions
Locating the Answers	Getting the Facts
Getting the Main Idea	Drawing Conclusions
Word Wheels	Dolch sight cards, etc.
Charts	Records
Filmstrips	Reading Tests

Proposal 3. A reading committee should be formed at each school with the reading specialist as chairman. Some of the duties of this committee are:

1. To evaluate the reading program.
2. To teach new teachers about the school's reading program.
3. To promote the school reading program to parents.
4. To hold a faculty meeting each year on reading.

5. To involve teachers in inservice programs and the IRA.
6. To select new materials for the school.
7. To innovate in the school reading program.

Four timely innovative reading programs could be considered by reading teachers, timely because they relate to today's children and timely because they cost the school little or no money.

Project 1. Use of newspapers is an exciting innovation. Tests for such a project are available from the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08540. Manuals and supplementary materials are available from the American Newspaper Publishers Association, 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017. If local newspapers cooperate in the project, many teaching aids can become available. However, any classroom teacher interested in using newspapers could start such a project without getting anyone else involved.

Project 2. Broadcast media promote better reading. Two summer television reading programs will be broadcast over a Fort Wayne station during the summer of 1970. One, entitled "Ride the Reading Rocket," will be for children who have completed the first grade. A second program, "Up Up and Away," will be broadcast for children who will be promoted to grades 4, 5, and 6. Activity books necessary for these programs will be available through St. Francis College for $1.25 each.

Project 3. Young authors can be developed through a creative writing project that results in books written by children being placed in the school library. The September, 1966, issue of the Grade Teacher has an excellent article on bookbinding as a major project. Work of young authors can be shown in display case or at open house or read to children in other classes. The news media would certainly feature such a project if books and children were available for pictures and a story.

Project 4. Older children can tutor younger children in reading. Upper grade children could be assigned to a lower grade teacher, or the lower grade children could report to the library, study hall, auditorium, or other available location.

Some suggestions for implementing this project follow:

1. Create a permanent structure. This does not have to be a one-year project discarded for another "innovation"

next year. Keep the project simple to administrate so it will not be a burden on the staff.

2. Avoid practices that take upper-grade students out of academic classes. Use noon time.

3. Tutoring should be an addition to the teacher's reading program rather than a replacement of it.

4. Any publicity should promote the team effort of teachers and children rather than to say that upper grade children are now doing what could not be done in primary grades.

5. Upper-grade tutors can be boys or girls who care about helping other children. Grades probably are not as important as desire, motivation, and friendliness.

6. Tutors could receive inservice from a sponsor. They can exchange ideas and be shown how to teach sight words.

7. Tutoring should be kept simple. Audio-visual equipment will tend to complicate rather than help. Tutors could do such work as:

   a. Teach basic vocabulary.
   b. Listen to or read aloud with children in their basal reader or other easy books.
   c. Help the child complete workbook or ditto assignments made by the teacher.

8. The primary teacher should make a folder for each pupil who is to be tutored. Each day she indicates pages to be read and words to be studied.

Innovations happen because someone cares enough to devote time and energy to bring them about. Better use of materials, better help for new teachers, and changing programs to fit the changing times come from professional leadership. The reading committee, the reading center, and the responsible, professional reading leader provide the climate for change in the 1970's.

Dr. William Sheldon, Professor of Education, Syracuse University, is the director of the Syracuse University Reading Clinic and a past president of the International Reading Association. He is the major author of a leading basal text.

Basal Readers in Grade One

The first grade reading study conducted at Syracuse University was a comparison of three sets of materials designed for the teaching of beginning reading. These were

1. Ginn Basic Reading Series, Revised Edition;
2. Structural Reading Series, L. W. Singer Company;
3. Let's Read, Leonard Bloomfield and Clarence L. Barnhart.

Subjects were 469 children in twenty-one central New York classrooms who, at the end of kindergarten, had been assigned to first grade classrooms. The twenty-one teachers in these classrooms had agreed to be placed in any one of the three treatment groups.

Children in seven classrooms were taught to read using the Ginn series. It is a program which gives particular attention in the primary grades to word-study skills and comprehension skills, good reading habits, and the development of desirable attitudes and appreciations. Materials included readers and accompanying manuals, workbooks, tests, word cards, charts, and enrichment materials. The Ginn approach to the teaching of word-analysis skills is one which is termed eclectic in that it involves phonetic analysis, structural analysis, context clues, and picture clues.

The seven classrooms of children which used the Structural Reading Series (modified linguistic materials) experienced instruction based on the development of an insight into the relationship between the spoken and written language. In this program the spoken word is taken as the starting point; it is the meaningful whole which the child learns to analyze so that he readily distinguishes its component parts. From the analysis of the spoken word, the children advance to the sounding out of the corresponding

printed word by learning to recognize the main part at a glance and simply attach the ending. The program starts with a readiness book for kindergarten or grade 1 and proceeds to two books for grade 1 and two books for grade 2.

The remaining seven classes used the linguistic readers developed by Leonard Bloomfield and Clarence L. Barnhart. This program is based on grapheme-phoneme correspondences with no irregular words introduced until late in grade one materials. There is little emphasis on developing comprehension skills at early stages of instruction because of the definition of reading which the authors suggested. According to Bloomfield and Barnhart, initial reading involves only the decoding of printed symbols. Hence, the program includes no systematic approach to the building of comprehension skills. Materials include nine readers with an accompanying manual for the teacher, nine workbooks to be used with the readers, and an ABC book designed to teach the letters of the alphabet before work in the readers begins. The entire program is designed to be completed by an average class by the end of grade two.

Initial activities during September, 1964, included workshops for each group of seven teachers. These workshops were conducted by representatives of the three publishing companies whose materials were being used and were considered necessary in order to familiarize the three groups of teachers with the philosophy and instructional practices upon which the three programs were based. Throughout the year, the teachers met with the Syracuse University research staff in order to discuss any questions on methodology which arose and to share teaching techniques. In addition a member of the research staff observed each teacher every two weeks on an unscheduled basis. Such observation was deemed necessary to make certain the materials were being used properly. The observations also provided questions and problems to be clarified at the periodic meetings.

Pre-experiment testing during September and October, 1964, included

1. Pintner-Cunningham Primary Test, Form A, Revised, 1964;
2. Metropolitan Readiness Test, Form A, 1964;
3. Murphy-Durrell Diagnostic Reading Readiness Test, Revised, 1964;
4. Thurstone Pattern Copying, Experimental Edition;

5. Thurstone and Jeffrey Identical Forms, Experimental Edition; and
6. Allyn and Bacon Pre Reading Test.

Following the pretesting a 140-day instructional period began during which each teacher used for instruction only that program to which she had been assigned. That is, there were no other instructional materials used on a supplementary basis. However, library-type materials were provided each classroom. Pupils could look at or read these as they wished. At the end of the instructional period in May, 1965, the following instruments were administered to all children in the study:

1. Stanford Achievement Test, Primary I Battery, Form X, 1964;
2. San Diego Pupil Attitude Inventory;
3. Writing Sample; and
4. Allyn and Bacon First Reader Test.

A randomly selected subsample of thirty-five subjects from each treatment group was administered the following individual tests:

1. Gilmore Oral Reading Test,
2. Fry Test of Phonetically Regular Words,
3. Gates Word Pronunciation Test, and
4. Karlsen Phonemic Word Test.

No significant differences between treatment groups were found on pretest measures of mental age, chronological age, and readiness test scores. The analysis indicates no differences in achievement or attitude toward reading across the treatment groups.

An analysis of the results of the Gates, Fry, and Karlsen tests, administered to the randomly selected subsample indicated no differences. The teacher variable was of significant importance. Inspection of other post test results suggests that boys were not different in their achievement from girls.

Helen W. Hardman, first grade teacher, Marshall Memorial Grade School, is the author of a special reading alphabet which has been reported in the Reading Teacher.

Alphabet Innovation

John B. Carroll says:

> Just as the child learns spoken language in such a way that he can understand and utter sentences he has never heard before, so also he must learn to read written language in such a way that he can recognize words he has never seen before, and for certain purposes write words he has never seen before. This kind of learning is what reading authorities refer to when they talk about "word-attack skills." The fact that in language learning, learning to understand speech and learning to speak are parallel processes argues for parallel teaching of reading and writing.

Constance McCullough comments:

> It is interesting to note that when children have difficulty learning to read, we tend to blame material or method, and a critic comes along and says, "Do more of this." More phonics, for example. Actually, instead of doing more of what we have been doing, we should be exploring for the missing parts that we haven't known and haven't used . . . There are plenty of parts still missing in our knowledge of language. There is much still to explore. And I believe it will be only when the teacher of reading informs herself in the new findings in linguistics and psychology, and studies the possibility of their congenial application, that a new program superior to the ones currently used will emerge.

And Dorothy Seymour states her conclusion:

> The main difference between a linguistic and a phonic approach to reading instruction is that phonics gave primacy to letters, and seemed to place spoken language under their control, whereas linguistics points to the priority of speech, and demonstrates that writing is merely a way of recording that speech by the use of symbols. Proof of the antecedence of speech to writing lies in the work of linguists with "primitive" tribes; they often discovered that these groups had very elaborate language systems which were, however, as yet unrecorded in writing . . . A linguist, in devising a method of writing the language was not creating the language itself; he was merely recording it. Thus the language was not controlled by the symbols: the symbols were dependent upon the language.
>
> Similarly, the child who is taught reading from a linguistic point of view is led to understand that a person who can speak can also learn to read and write. He knows that he will be in control of the symbols he uses to represent his language; the symbols will not control him.

Blending the child's natural language and his interest in the rhythm and flow of literature, yet not neglecting the alphabetic principle in approaching writing and reading, Manchester Community Schools have developed a phonemic alphabet adapted from the respelling found in current dictionaries. For four years this transcription has been used in one first-grade class for experience charts, child-dictated-stories and teacher-made reading materials which build the bridge from oral language to reading. A new primary typewriter which adds the schwa and diacritical marks extends these possibilities. The symbols are used by the children in early writing experiences and as long as pupils need them. There are no specially printed books. The reading program is oriented to a total language approach. Dictionary symbols were chosen on the premise that use of letters of the conventional alphabet with the addition only of the macron, the dot above, and certain underlinings, transition to conventional spelling would be easy. Use of diacritical markings would form a foundation for use of the dictionary. Pupils would be familiar with the appearance of phonetic respelling, except for separation of syllables; they would be accustomed to retranslating

symbols into sounds; and they would be trained in recognizing the basic sounds of language, a skill prerequisite to success in language arts.

These premises have been borne out. Pupils have readily mastered the phonemes and graphemes; they are proud of their "code" and move easily into basal material after an eight-week study of sound and symbol. This move occurs later than with previous methods, but the pace through basic instruction and into real reading goes very fast. Use of conventional print simultaneously with continued use of phonemic transcription for writing and for teacher-made supplementary materials does not bother the students at all--perhaps because children always learn to read the varieties of conventional spelling more readily than they learn to write them. It is only adults who have never learned to use the dictionary guide and phonetic respelling who are bothered; these skills have been found to be more easily taught to children who are still in the "creeping stage" of reading than to older children who have already developed sight vocabulary and ability to read rapidly. Furthermore, this method can be used without an investment in specially printed respelled materials, which become immediately unphonetic when moved from one regional dialect to another. Materials prepared by the teacher include group or individual dictation or bits of literature, which can be transcribed into the standard dialect of any area.

To teach one symbol for each sound and then to move from sound symbol into spelling patterns has proved to be a rational and effective approach to teaching phonetic analysis. We call this "linguistic phonics" because traditional phonics contains so much that is inaccurate and misleading. Relative consistency in the conventional spelling of the consonant sounds has always allowed effective teaching of aural-visual perception of the consonant sounds. Except during the height of the "look-say" period, this pattern has been used by many teachers. But the multiplicity of graphemes representing the vowel phonemes in conventional spelling makes their aural-visual presentation at an early level impossible, unless special symbols are provided which allow a one-to-one initial presentation. The child masters the technique of moving from left to right with the consonants, skipping the vowels and using context clues, with much success in longer graphic, active and descriptive words. One-syllable words of the consonant-short vowel-consonant variety can be read only with attention to the vowel. Traditional delay of vowel grapheme

teaching until second grade results in poor reading habits and inaccurate reading.

In composition, the child who is able to hear the sounds and set down a symbol for each can transcribe anything he wants to say in a way intelligible and acceptable to the teacher and to himself. He is not using a wrong spelling but a different code. He adds the conventional spelling to his store of knowledge about the language as fast as he is able to master the intricate system and the irregularities, replacing special symbols with spelling patterns. Meanwhile, monosyllables with consistently regular and phonemic spelling patterns, which are emphasized in many materials now offered as "linguistic," have already been mastered.

The children using the phonemic alphabet like to write and to read; May tests using a standardized achievement battery yielded superior ratings for their reading. Informal tests indicated superior achievement in spelling as well. Use of the phonemic alphabet seems to suggest that children can have the benefits of a simplified and consistent spelling system for initial reading, writing and phonetic instruction without specially printed materials, the set-back of delayed transition and wasted learning.

A Simplified Phonemic Alphabet

a (ate)	b	w
e (eat)	k and c	y
i (ice)	d	z and s
o (old)	f	sh
u and u (too and use)	g (go)	ch
a (at)	h	th (thin)
e (red)	j	th (this)
i (it)	l	wh
o (hot, far)	m	"elongated n" (sing)
"schwa" (up, son, ago)	n	z and s (treasure)
o (for, saw, ball)	p	
u (put, look)	r	
ou (out, cow)	s	
oi (boy, oil)	t	
-r (her, fur, sugar)	v	

For children it is practical to present the diphthongs ou and oi, and also the reversed cluster wh/hw/, as units.

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Storybook Guidance

Have you ever received a message that someone very dear has been in an accident or is seriously ill, and then tried to go on with your regular work? Did you have difficulty trying to keep your mind on what you were doing? Or if you were reading or studying, after half an hour did you give up because you could not concentrate; you didn't know a word you had read?

And what about Johnny or Mary or Susy or Mike who are listless or inattentive in school, who seem to be in another world? Do we scold them for being lazy, not wanting to learn? Children have their problems, too. While adults are often inclined to view the child's problems trivial, they are very real to the youngster and must be resolved before learning can take place.

When a child causes a disturbance in the classroom or on the playground, what approach do we take? Do we try to discover the reason for his actions? Jersild suggests that rather than try to transform him, it is better to help him gain insight into his nature and to consider the consequences of his actions. Dinkmeyer explains that an "unmet need" is frequently the cause of misbehaviour. Tozier has observed that one of the fundamental needs of every child who has a problem is to know that he is not <u>alone</u>. Barbe tells us that one of the values of reading is "coming to know others who have similar problems."

One of the best ways for a child to gain insight into himself, to have a better understanding of himself and others, is to identify with a storybook character, an experience through which he shares the feelings of other human beings, feelings about their predicaments, their relationships, their joys, their sorrows. This process is known as BIBLIOTHERAPY, or storybook guidance.

Gray recommends the use of bibliotherapy in the classroom, whereby the child may "discover how others face and solve existing problems." It lies within the reach of every teacher, who need not be a skilled therapist, nor does the child need to be a seriously handicapped or maladjusted individual needing clinical treatment.

How does one begin this technique? What approach should one take? First it is necessary to become well-acquainted with children's books, and the only way to do this is to read the books. Brief discussions about the book, telling the children what it is about in a snappy capsule summary without revealing the crucial points, showing enthusiasm while sharing the story, will accomplish much. Book displays, attractive bulletin boards, reading lists (suggestions, not "musts"), reading clubs, posted notices of story-related programs on radio and television, recordings and films, book reviews and discussions by children, role playing and dramatization, children's own illustrations of stories they have read--all these build interest in books and bring the right book to the right child.

Books for guidance might be listed in the following categories, with reference to a child's problems or needs:

1. Problems of appearance
2. Problems of physical handicaps
3. Problems of siblings, place in family, new baby
4. Problems of acceptance by peer group or by oneself
5. Problems of atypical homes, unhappy home situations, broken homes
6. Problems of unsettled living and economic insecurity
7. Problems of "foreign" or "different" background
8. Need for diversion

Many of the books fall under more than one classification. Furthermore, the magic lies, not in the book itself, but in what happens between the child and the book.

Group guidance sessions are one of the best ways to introduce bibliotherapy. One might begin with Felsen's Bertie Comes Through. One must help the children "feel" with Bertie Poodle, a friendly boy with round bright blue eyes, tossled straw-colored hair that would never lie down,

fair pink-skinned complexion and pug nose, whose great desire was to be a top football player, but who was so short and so overweight that he was good only for "comic relief." The children suffer with and feel compassion for Bertie as he suffers defeat after defeat, and they admire his courage and humor as he never gives up. Other problems Bertie contends with are a tag-along little brother and a Dad who doesn't seem to understand that boys need to be accepted by their peers. Bertie becomes so conscious of his own problems that he fails to recognize how his remarks hurt a girl who is extremely tall and thin.

In The Funny Guy, by Hogarth, children can feel with a girl who is very lonely while her mother spends months in the hospital, and who must take teasing from thoughtless boys and girls who do not realize what a heavy burden she is carrying in her heart.

Screwball, by Armer, will appeal to those boys and girls who suffer from being compared to siblings who are more talented or superior in other ways. Mike, who always felt inferior to his twin, does not realize that he has been feeling sorry for himself. What a wonderful experience it is when he begins to know who he is, and that "it's all right to be that person!"

The Worst Room in the School, by Muehl, will prove delightful reading, and every child in the room will find a character with whom he can identify. He will also become aware of the problems of others. This book also appeals to the "new teacher."

Fear grips the heart of many a child who will be better able to resolve his own conflicts when he reads Afraid to Ride, by Anderson, in which Judy wins back her confidence.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, by Dahl, will be enjoyed by younger children, and one need not moralize to help them understand what happens to children who disobey, who always want their way, who always want to watch TV (and here even the parents might learn a lesson). This is a book to be read to the children.

Sometimes, as Arbuthnot recommends, the best guidance is no guidance at all, a "hands-off policy until the storm passes or the tensions are eased." The young reader, at such times, needs to be carried out of himself by becoming absorbed in a tale of humor or the unravelling of some exciting mystery. Sheer nonsense stories can relax tensions and bring as much cheer as a beam of sunlight on a dark, dreary day.

Storybooks about everyday people, their hardships, their self-sacrifice and persistence when faced by great trials are valuable for guidance. They build a child's faith in himself and others. They foster joy in being alive, a desire to welcome each new day with renewed courage. Many of life's problems, large and small, can be lessened or solved through the pages of an appropriate book.

Anthony Lillich, fourth grade teacher at East Side Elementary School, Bluffton-Harrison Community Schools, is the president-elect of the Adams-Wells Council of the I.R.A.

Creative Pupil Construction

Creativity lies in everyone. In the child, creativity is manifested naturally in playtime activities of his own. However, natural creativity can be stifled in the classroom setting if the teacher does not provide the vehicle for the child's emerging creative impulses. Such a vehicle must be attractive enough to stimulate the child's interest. Then watch creativity blossom!

Learning is enhanced by surrounding creative story writing with audio visual devices such as 8mm films, 35mm filmstrips, transparencies and tape recordings. A group of fourth and fifth grade boys and girls worked in small groups of from four to ten. The groups chose the device they were to use. They were encouraged to invent their own creations which were submitted to the whole class for approval before being used in regular class work.

Some groups worked on projects in their own classroom, and others used various rooms throughout the school which suited their project. Pupils were encouraged to be as imaginative as possible through frequent classroom discussions of progress in their particular project. Teacher guidance and encouragement were important throughout the entire project, but especially during the initial phase when the groups were beginning to write stories which were used as the basis for their audio-visual inventions. It was difficult for the members of some groups to select the best ideas evolved from brainstorming by the group. After the

initial phase was completed, the children became increasingly enthusiastic and progressed rapidly as their creations came to life.

Important learning took place when the children enthusiastically wrote their own stories and scripts which they later memorized or read for tape recordings. They also displayed their artistic talents in making scenery, drawing illustrations on transparencies and filmstrips and designing costumes.

In the evaluation by teachers and students after they completed their project, each group of youngsters decided that they had felt highly motivated in a worthwhile activity that encouraged their creativity. Pupils explored the entire spectrum of group dynamics activities used its motivations. The children had an excellent chance to solve the problems arising from differences between people who are attempting to pool their thoughts and direct their efforts toward a common purpose.

Materials needed for the project:

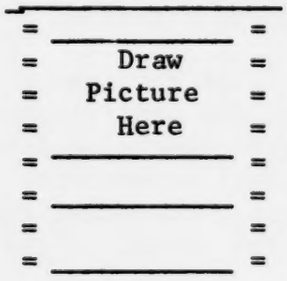
FILM:

8mm camera outfit - flood light for indoor pictures, 1 roll of 8mm indoor film is $3-$4, which should include processing.
Cassette or standard tape recorder for sound track.
Scenery, costumes, story, script to be worked out by children.
8mm Projector

FILMSTRIP:

Cassette or standard tape recorder - for sound track
Filmstrip - available at McJohn's Inc. 3420 N. Wells, Fort Wayne, Ind. Cost: $2.00 It can be written on with colored pencil, ball point pen, typewriter or permanent ink marker.

How to draw illustrations on Filmstrip:



This is the actual size of the filmstrip.
It is possible to draw 25-30 pictures on each roll of film.

35mm Filmstrip Projector

TRANSPARENCIES:

Transparencies
Overhead Projector
Transparency Markers - Overhead markers can be erased. Permanent markers can be used, but they can not be erased. The ink should not be water based.
Cassette Tape Recorder

DeNeal Lillich, first grade teacher at Aboite Elementary School, Southwest Allen County Schools, is the past secretary of the Little Turtle Council of the I.R.A. She is a mother of six and a grandmother of seven.

Physical Activities in Reading

Learning through movement enhances the development of young children--their physical and psychological abilities, their ability to learn, their ability to get along with each other, their feelings about themselves and their relation to the environment. The theories on which this program is based are described in Movement Education: Theory and Practice by Marianne Frostig and Phyllis Maslow, a Follett publication.

More than 160 exercises and procedures are embodied in a set of cards that develop movement skills, creativity and body awareness. The teacher's guide that accompanies the exercises discusses background material on movement, language development, teaching of children with learning difficulties, and facilities and equipment for the program. The program is designed for children from kindergarten through the primary grades, but it can be used in higher grades if structured games and sports, training in endurance, and training in speed are added.

Either regular teachers or physical education teachers can conduct the program. But the goals of movement education are not mere physical fitness induced by systematic exercises and sports and games. The objectives of movement education include far more--ability to make speed responses,

to focus attention and to exert control. The activities are designed to meet all the needs of children. The teacher, therefore, must base her choice of exercises and activities on what is known about children's needs and growth. Movement education is designed to promote good health and a sense of well being and to develop sensory-motor skills and self awareness.

Movement education can be conducted without apparatus but using it enhances teamwork, focuses attention, develops coordination, agility, flexibility and balance, and gives children a wonderful sense of mastery. Well-equipped playgrounds should have sufficient apparatus for climbing, jumping, balancing and crawling. Here is a suggested list of equipment:

1. Jungle gym or tree
2. Balance beam or log, 2" x 4" board 6-12 ft. long, supported by posts at both ends
   Beginners use 4" surface and progress to 2" surface
3. Balance board - square platform with center post
   Three inch, four inch and five inch posts are commonly provided
4. Trampoline or trampoline board
5. Swings and slides
6. Sandbox

Mariana Miller, reading specialist, Village Elementary School, East Allen County Schools, has served as the Vice-Chairman of the Indiana Reading Specialists Association and has been a supervisor in the Indiana University Reading Clinic.

Vocabulary Enrichment

The ability to communicate is essential to learning. Language is more than words, but words are the building blocks from which language is structured. By the time a child enters school, he uses approximately 2,500 words and

understands from 17,000 to 24,000 words. A child's success or failure in reading, spelling, and writing is directly related to how well he has developed verbal skills.

Because of the current emphasis on exploring the why and how of problems, teachers must encourage pupils to think for themselves. Combining thinking skills with language arts experiences is an excellent way of developing and measuring progress in thinking abilities. Through language arts, thinking abilities can be put into operational terms--listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The thinking process includes five basic parts: observing, classifying, comparing, analyzing and problem solving.

Countless opportunities to encourage observation occur in school life. One second grade pupil left his uneaten lunch in his locker for a few weeks. Discovering the sack, he opened it and found a green mold on the bread which had a smell of decay. The children were motivated to bring food from home to observe for the next few days. Bacon, cheese, coffee grounds, and carrots were used. Each child observed the food and kept a record of day-to-day changes. Thus each pupil had his own experience of growing mold and could observe the molds grown by his classmates. A problem was solved using the scientific method which enriched reading. Sensory images were explored. Keeping a daily account of observation meant being accurate and provided an outlet for thoughts and emotions.

Keeping a daily diary of other kinds of observations such as those of weather conditions, city or world events, can be similarly useful. A pupil may look at the same tree three or four times a year. A teacher in Arlington, Virginia, encouraged her pupils to spend fifteen silent minutes carefully examining a tree. When they returned to the classroom, they discussed changes they observed in the tree and the meanings of these changes. The teacher recorded many of their observations, saving them to compare with those seen during their next visit.

Another lesson in observation came when pupils discuss similarities and differences in foods they ate for lunch. An entire unit on the culture and customs of various groups of people evolves from these discussions. Samples of different foods from Spain, Italy, China, or India are brought in and tasted. On the spot verbalizations are fed into the tape recorder to be recorded later on paper.

Classifying grows naturally out of the observing process when pupils increase their ability to recognize likenesses and differences. Simple problems are easy to

get a young mind in motion. He learns who is the smallest or the tallest in his family. He recognizes his dad's car from other cars in the neighborhood. He knows his coat from other coats. He can tell if the piece of pie he gets is smaller than his sister's piece. He compares a similar object with another object of the same species, or he compares the ways we travel today with the ways men traveled one hundred years ago. He discovers how people travel across a desert compared to the way they travel through city streets or small towns. Then a child knows how to classify when he comes to verbal learning situations.

Each child, no matter where he lives, brings a rich heritage of culture and history. It is the teacher's duty to motivate him to realize the importance of this background through the magic of books, filmstrips, library picture cards, or records. He may be led on field trips through a neighborhood, observing any evidence of cultures of other lands or on a walk through the local grocery to see if any special food products are for sale or any plants available that might reflect cultural backgrounds.

The newspaper affords tremendous opportunities for comparisons. Using more than one newspaper the pupil may seek articles on the same news event and try to decide if one newspaper reports the article differently. Discoveries of differences motivate the pupil to try to find out through discussion why the difference occurs. Reviews in magazines and newspapers of sports events, films, television shows, or books can be compared.

Tools to enrich word meaning are available. The "Reading Incentive Film" series produced by the Communications Laboratory of the Bank Street College of Education, shows entertainment personalities reading good literature. These arouse children's interest in reading and motivate the teacher to read aloud to the child more often. Good literature stretches a child's imagination and makes him aware of the beauty around him.

A classroom library should be filled with many kinds of literature to nurture word enrichment: humorous stories to make the pupil chuckle, make-believe stories to stir his imagination, true-life stories to build his understanding of the world around him, and stories about kids like himself in real-life, everyday situations to help him better understand himself. Books on poetry are a must. Poetry is for reading and rereading. Favorites should be taped for pupil listening at odd moments in the classroom. Pupils should record their own favorites.

An old typewriter might motivate a child to express himself. A classroom camera would add special meaning to a museum or zoo visit. An enlarged picture of "Snoopy" from the "Peanuts" comic strip, might challenge a slow learner to write a story. Snoopy could be busy writing with a caption nearby saying,"Will you write a story too?" In this age of sign-carrying, Snoopy might be pictured carrying a sign reading, "Books! Books! Read 10 books and join the parade!" Again, Snoopy could be pictured flying on his doghouse in hot pursuit of the Red Baron. The caption might read, "Read 15 books and help Snoopy shoot down the Red Baron."

Word knowledge of pupils is being constantly enriched. There are more tools to enhance the language arts than ever before. Teachers have a duty to enable this generation of children to have many creative experiences so that they may clearly express themselves, increase their self confidence, and become more able human beings.

Angela Schurr, first grade teacher, Garrett-Keyser-Butler School, Ober Elementary Schools, is from Italy. She has developed an unusual approach to the teaching of reading in her short residence in the United States.

My Own Method

A foundation for reading may be built without books by teaching vowels and consonants. The natural sounds of the long vowels and the sounds of the short vowels may be taught by board work and examples. The overhead projector effectively displays sounds with matching pictures. Paper and pencil practice should be used.

Consonant teaching can begin with the capital and lower case "L." Paper and pencil practice provides a successful experience for each pupil, since this simple letter is easily drawn. Successful experiences build the pupil's confidence. Practice should then be given on "D," "C," "B," "R," "T," "P," "N," and "M" in that order. Continued practice is needed until each pupil reaches a level of mastery.

Blends again can be taught without books, with pencil and paper practice. The initial group to be taught includes "Dr, "Tr," "Pr," "Br," and "Cr." The second group includes "BL," "CL," and "PL."

The next steps are as follows: complete alphabet, consonant diagraphs, single syllable word sounding, suffixes, prefixes and syllable division for recognition. An economy program will use a workbook which will build confidence and speed comprehension by recall.

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the Executive Board of the State
I.R.A. Council.

Reading in the Middle School

Assume an administration gave a teacher freedom to innovate. Would the teacher use it? Teachers sometimes like structured slots and don't want new ideas. One superintendent remarked, "Teachers are a dime a dozen." If making assignments, checking, and testing are teaching, the superintendent was right. Teachers can be innovative and creative and work with individual difference if they want to. Teachers can know their students and put them on individualized programs. A teacher is a person dedicated to answer the needs of all students. He has no excuse for side stepping the issue. He can do what he wants to do. Commissioner James Allen says that in the 70's, every child has the right to read.

All students at a given grade level do not read at this level. We can find the reading level of these students fairly easily. Ask your reading supervisor to investigate, if you have one, or just ask the student to read a selection aloud. If the material is too difficult, if the student makes ten or more mistakes on half a page, he will lose interest in the book. It's fun to teach the student who has learned all the book answers and the teachers's answers. However, such a student could have

been handed the book and learned it without being taught at all. A teacher who knows the reading scores of students and knows their free reading level and instructional level has several options.

In language arts class one teacher brought in reading books. Students have a period or two a week when they do nothing but read. Learning is taking place? Students are reading and enjoying it. Time was spent talking with students about their reading. We owe students the time to read in class, and to let them share with each other or the teacher reading experiences.

Math lends itself to a similar approach. Place each student where he is in basic skills; two or six at one point can work together on one skill. One teacher places students by twos. They work together on a math unit, take the tests separately and either move to a different partner or review the skill. The better student does not need to repeat problems on skills he has mastered.

Social studies and science students need books that they can read if they are going to read. The teacher can make good use of audio visual material and oral reading by preparing a tape of the chapter spoken in simpler language for the child who just can't keep up. Students can prepare tapes for the class and use these for class discussions. A slow group should not drill and drill and repeat. It is better to change activities for bored students who need to be helped, not dragged, through the material. Sometimes a taped news broadcast about current events or science in the news can be analyzed as a class project or a group project.

A student's ability to retain information is ten percent of what he reads, twenty percent of what he hears, thirty percent of what he says, fifty percent of what he sees and hears, seventy percent of what he sees as he talks, and ninety percent of what he says as he is doing something.

Teachers must individualize as much as possible, allowing the student to do things. Each teacher must be creative and innovative in his own way, constantly aware of a new way of doing things and willing to change.

Dr. Joe Lillich, Assistant Professor of Education, Indiana University, Fort Wayne, is co-ordinator of the reading program at the Fort Wayne Campus. He is past president of the Tippkee Council of the I.R.A. and a former committee chairman of the Publicity and Finance Committees of the State I.R.A. Council. Dr. Lillich has taught grades four through graduate level and was formerly Elementary Co-ordinator of the Tri-Township United Schools, Bourbon, Indiana.

Defining Creativity

Calvin Taylor points to various concepts of creativity. Taylor explains that predictors of creativity are originality, flexibility, fluency, elaboration, as well as ability to puzzle over things of concern, and to evaluate. Predictors of creativity are elements frequently overlooked in measurement of intelligence. According to Taylor the creative person is more observant and open to new experiences. He sees the world as a complex organization in which everything functions at the same time.

Guilford and Getzel suggest that the characteristics of a highly creative person are a high sense of humor, a wide range of interest, emotional stability, and high imaginative powers. Guilford and Getzel point out that a high percentage of intelligent children are not creative. But the intelligence of creative children is above average. Guilford and Getzel found that children who were creative often had adjustment problems in the classroom. These children were unruly, dominant in their dealings with others, and quite independent.

Arthur Combs has studied the child and his opportunity to be successful within an environment which allows for errors in becoming. The author, Catherine Patrick, has pointed out the four creative processes: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. Patrick's "preparation" period is one in which the creative person spends great time and effort in analyzing information--"looking things over and wondering how things might

be improved." The incubation period, for Patrick, is a time "looking for answers." Illumination, the third of Patrick's creative processes, is the "ah..hah!" process. The creative individual spends much time seeking solution; then suddenly he has the right answer! The illumination process may take place over a period of time and may produce many false leads. The last process of creativity is verification, "putting the plan to a test." Answers can be tested by the creative person himself or by outside sources.

In The Art and Science of Creativity, George Kneller lists the conditions for creativity: receptivity, immersion, commitment and detachment, imagination and judgment, interrogation, use of errors, submission to the work of creation. Many opportunities are missed by elementary teachers as they seek the best "learning environment." As they handle "interrogation," teachers find themselves threatened by students who ask "too many questions," who seek to go "the step beyond," who fight for knowledge which may be beyond the teacher himself. How many children seeking knowledge have had the "seeking torn away," because the teacher did not understand this condition of creativity or did not see it as a desirable trait? Personality traits of the creative person as given by Kneller are intelligence, awareness, fluency, elaboration, intellectual playfulness, skepticism, persistence, originality, flexibility, humor, self-confidence, and nonconformity. How many of these traits get in the way of the efficient, every-day-three-pages teacher!

Creativity is fostered by a rich environment, the richness of multi-experiences, of multi-sensory interaction, of having people in the environment who understand the meaning of creativity and foster the growth of creative students. Everyone, in some degree, is creative. The responsibility of the elementary teacher is to foster the conditions for creativity, allow time for the creative process to take place, and establish an environmental base for children to hold nonconforming ideas. The classroom environment should encourage non-conformity; provide a climate where the child can ask questions and seek solutions in an interacting environment; have a student centered curriculum; present unstructured lessons; allow room for students to make no "step into the areas of uncertainty," or areas that are not "what-we-cover-this-year." The teacher is the single most source of action within the curriculum. Let the child grow through the development of his creativity.

Robert Rothhaar, Chairman of the English Department at Northwood Junior High School, Fort Wayne Community Schools, is an NDEA Institute member and past president of the Fort Wayne Teachers' Association.

Breaking up Hang-ups

The trappers and miners heading into the West in the early days believed that the present would hold more promise than the past and that the individual as an individual had rights and freedoms. We seem to be approaching a time when these beliefs are going to be challenged, if not completely overthrown.

Difficult as it is for man to conceive what existence was like in the days of the caveman, he has been out of the caves only about 19% of the time of his total existence. Alvin Toffler, a futuristic-sociologist, has a book called Future Shock scheduled to come out in April. He explains man's progress by showing that if man's 50,000 years of existence were divided into lifetimes of approximately 62 years each, there would be about 800 such lifetimes. Of these, 650 were spent in caves. Only during the last 70 has man been writing. Only during the last six has man seen the printed word. The progress electricity has provided has come about in the last two segments. Practically all the goods we use in normal life have come to us in the last of these lifetimes.

Man learned as much from the years 1900 to 1950 as he had learned up until 1900. In the years 1950 to 1960 man doubled his knowledge again. In short, man is learning, achieving, and acquiring in geometric progression. But learning, achieving, and acquiring at a rapid rate we must adjust to what is acquired. And fast adjustment assures problems.

Freedoms of the individual also are now being challenged. Expanding pollution and exploding population calls in question just how much freedom of individual choice we can afford. Soon we will reach the point where every person's little freedoms are an infringement on the freedoms of someone else.

Some children have played sandlot games, have disagreed over a game, and have not had to work out their problems in whatever way they could think of. They have been brought up in a world of organized Wildcat and Little League ball games. Most of their games are supplied with complete equipment, managers to do the planning and organizing, and umpires to make all the decisions. These kids have been denied the opportunity of having to outwit, reason with, or compromise with an adversary to get matters settled.

A whole generation has been saturated with T.V. Hayakawa estimates that a child watches about forty-four thousand hours of television by the time he is sixteen. The commercials tell the child that life is easy. If the kitchen is a mess, a girl simply puts on a party dress, buys some products other than brand X, pushes a button, and everything is orderly. If a boy wants to be chased by bikini clad beauties, he buys a Dodge Charger. If romance is fading, a girl uses Listerine and gets married in the next scene. And there is no need for couples to have disagreements any more; all they have to do is get the right cigarette for the two of them. Kids are being brought up to think that for every problem there is a single, simple, purchasable answer.

Although television makes life's problems seem easy to solve, the life they face is a complicated, fast-moving one which even we don't fully understand. Teachers must help students meet the challenges of today. First, we must encourage pupils to develop more respect for each other. Teachers should withdraw from being the class leader and try to place more of that responsibility on the kids. Classes should do much work in groups, each group assigned work on a project. They will not all agree on what is to be done or the approach to be used, but they will have to find a solution. The teacher should be available to serve as a resource person, but the group must arrive at its own conclusions. In some cases the conclusions should be projects that will involve everyone. If there are those who don't like the project, the objectors must complain to the society which developed it.

If the group project is one which must be graded, all members of a group can be given the same grade. This is going to be unfair to some good workers and a real break to the goldbricks. But life is this way. In every large office and production line there are those who "goof-off" and get the same wages as the rest. There are those who play politics and get ahead. Life is not always fair.

In group situations we have a chance to let kids experience some of life.

Another approach which is being needed, but one which will be difficult, is having each group member evaluate the other members of the group. To assign grades would be too simple. All would probably get A's. Each group member must be ranked as best, 2nd, 3rd, etc. Members can ask questions such as these: Who contributed most? Who provided most leadership? Who did the most research? Who assembled most of the material? Who did most of the writing?

The project would determine the questions used. But we need to encourage youngsters to make choices and decisions. All of us have to make more decisions and make them faster than ever before. As adults, we have to make many judgments which they would like to avoid, but they can't. Let's give our kids some practice.

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Fire and Form

A poem by Robert Frost tells "What Fifty Said":

> When I was young my teachers were the old.
> I gave up fire for form till I was cold.
> I suffered like a metal being cast.
> I went to school to age to learn the past.
> Now I am old my teachers are the young.
> What can't be molded must be cracked and sprung.
> I strain at lessons fit to start a suture.
> I go to school to youth to learn the future.

And here is another by an eight year old: listen to its tragic implication as it asks, "Who am I?"

I have many things I want to say but--
No one listens.
I have many things I want to do but--
No one lets me.
I have many places I want to go but--
No one takes me.
And the things I write are corrected but--
No one reads them.
Who am I?

That poem is a strong indictment. A youngster in second or third grade wrote "Spring is a long day"; and a teacher changed the wording to read, "In the spring the days are long." Patrick Bratton has written a poetic reply to her:

"Spring is a long day"
Is doubtless not the way
That Fun with Dick and Jane
Would say that lengthening light
Is children's great delight
In seeing end of winter's numbing pain.

But, dear Miss Kaplan, we
Prossic souls must be
Who dare to call it wrong.
For "Spring is a long day"
May be a poet's way
To sing the thought, "In Spring the days are long."

For Spring is a long day
When your aim is play
and buds are bursting wild.
And Spring is running fast
or rolling in the grass,
For even tulips smile when you're a child.

It is apparent why Frost wrote, "I traded fire for form till I was cold." How much are teachers responsible for putting out the fire? In teaching both written and oral language, teachers disapprove of students' deeply ingrained habits. The student comes to class with a great body of knowledge about oral language. He has heard it since infancy and has spoken it nearly all his life. But teachers tell him how incorrectly he has been saying things. The result is confusion, a defensive and negative reaction, or

withdrawal into reticence. Teachers squelch enthusiasm by demanding "proper usage." They interrupt to replace "he don't" with "he doesn't." Teachers should examine where they intend this process to lead and why they do it. Is the goal desirable and does it justify the means?

When teachers "correct" the students' "grammar," they aren't in the area of grammar at all; they are discussing usage. The word "correct" tells the student that he has committed a social blunder. He may have, but the usage blunder is so insignificant that the interruption is often worse than the error. And there may not have been an error at all. The student may not have been addressing his teacher, but may have been speaking to his friends and classmates. And if everyone else in the room says "he don't," the teacher is a dictatorial minority of one.

Most teachers plead that they are correcting for the good of the language sinner and that he must learn to speak correctly before he goes into society. But like the preacher in Maughum's "Rain," the teacher may be the problem that leads to tragedy. The January, 1970 issue of Psychology Today carries an article called "How the American Boy Is Feminized." It reports a study of the way education is geared to females and tells how the male student must either become less masculine to get along or else must rebel and fight, at least until drop-out age. Here is one of the author's observations on classroom language:

> School words tend to be the words of women. They have their own sound and smell, perfumed or antiseptic. Boys usually prefer tough and colorful short words--while teachers and girls lean towards longer, more floral opaque synonyms. School words are clean, refined, idealized, and as remote from physical things as the typical schoolmarm from the tough realities of ordinary life.
>
> Active word usage, as in speaking, is usually discouraged in school; students are expected to speak only when addressed. Even boys who refuse to read or write usually like to talk, but on their own terms.

The author found that language study was disliked by masculine boys and that one-half of the study group, the most masculine, got their lowest grades in English.

Does correction have result in a change in the student's usage? A student may realize that no one talks in school the way he does in "real life," and he may learn another usage level for his school hours. If this should occur, the pupil knows more about language than his teacher does. He knows two levels; whereas she is stuck with only one. He can talk her language, but she can't speak his. And if she helps him realize what he has accomplished, she will do some real educating.

We make most corrections because of our personal idiosyncrasies in language, and we become as emotional about what we feel is "right" as the student does. Only a rare teacher can rationally discuss "illiteracies" with a student. Usually the student becomes defensive about his "he don't" to the point where he decides that language rules make no sense; and the teacher re-inforces the student's attitude by justifying a correction with, "It's wrong! That's all! I don't want to hear you use the expression anymore." Both parties to this dispute have spent their lives learning to use language patterns and the language each uses is tied to his family, his social background, his taboos, and even his logical processes. An arbitrary method of dealing with language is easy and simple. To learn a set of rules, then to see that students know and follow the same rules, cause a teacher to know the student's language biases. And the student will know the teacher's. But neither will be convinced of the other's point of view.

Robert A. Hall identifies three types of usage "errors": the socially unacceptable, the "textbook" error and the taboo words and expressions. The first type might be exemplified by the word "ain't"; the second by "it's me"; and the third by common words for bodily functions and blasphemous or swear words. The last category seems to be changing so rapidly that most teachers cannot keep pace with their students. Students use expressions in daily conversation that middle-class teachers were taught to shun. The "textbook" error is a usage which many textbooks consider unacceptable, but which almost everyone uses. Hall says that teachers waste time with these. The other error perhaps should concern teachers. It is typified by the "ain't" error--that which is almost uniformly frowned upon by educated speakers. But when discussing these expressions, teachers must not make middle-class pronouncements. The acceptability of such locutions changes both in time and geographic location. And teachers should remember

that rules for acceptability or unacceptability have no basis in logic. Students who say that a rule makes no sense speak the truth. At least they are giving language rules some thought, and teachers might use their attitudes as points for further discussion. Hall says:

> The social acceptability, and hence "correctness" of any form or word is determined, not by reason or logic or merit, but solely by the hearer's emotional attitudes which differ from person to person, from group to group, from social class to social class.

Are you reacting emotionally to what I have been saying? I hope you understand that much of your reaction <u>is</u> emotional and that "right and wrong" are not involved; for unless we change our basic attitudes about language, we are going to continue to turn many students off--to trade the "fire for form." As teachers of language, we should be as immune to irrational reactions as it is possible for us to make ourselves. There is no way to make the language itself reasonable; however, we must learn to study and discuss reasonably.

A reasonable approach means that we cannot go into ecstasies about the beautiful sounds of certain words or phrases. For many people there is nothing less interesting and motivating than to listen to a grown man or woman talking at length about how lovely the word "murmur" is. This does not mean we must give up thinking that "murmur" is a beautiful word, only that we should not try to impose our positive nor our negative reaction to it on our students. An appreciation of the esthetic qualities of language is very complex and personal. When you first began really to think about the transcendent qualities of certain lines and phrases, it was after you were past the age of your present students and it was not something you learned in class. We may continue to expose our students to language purely for esthetic reasons, but let us be judicious about our approach and our timing, selective in the students we try to teach these qualities.

In Don Wolfe's book <u>Creative Ways to Teach English</u>, a chapter on poetry reprints Whitman's "I Am He That Walks":

Press close, bare-bosomed night! Press close,
magnetic, nourishing night!
Night of south winds! night of large few stars!
Still, nodding night! mad, naked, summer night.

The author tells us we should have our students pick out the most "intense phrases of electric force . . ." I congratulate the professor if he can do that in his class. Many students of mine would decide that here is a class hour wasted. More than a few would find the poem funny in the same way that the students in Up The Down Staircase found Emily Dickinson's poetry funny. And, really, it is. But most of us would react with anger if we caught any of the students laughing aloud. After all, this is poetry we are discussing.

The business of changing attitudes is difficult. But we can teach good language habits without rules, without pronouncements of right and wrong from teachers, without emotional reactions that have dominated us in the past. We must change our own attitudes toward our subject, and we must change our image. Every teacher of English has had the experience of meeting a person for the first time and hearing his new acquaintance say, upon learning that he is shaking hands with an English teacher, "I'll have to watch my grammar." I am irritated and offended by that reaction; but the fault is not in the speaker, but in some of his teachers of English. I usually avoid telling strangers what I teach because that knowledge interferes with the free flow of conversation.

We must approach the language of our students objectively and, when we editorialize about our personal likes and dislikes about language, we must label these opinions clearly as editorials. The students will, in time, see the value of the approach and find that the teacher seems more human because he admits to opinions. The teacher unused to this approach will find at first that students demand absolute statements about usage. Particularly the more intelligent ones want to be sure. Not knowing what is "right" or "wrong" makes them uneasy. But the teacher must not give in to these demands, lest he perpetuate a dogmatic approach. The teacher must show that there are several levels of usage and that the student needs to adjust his usage to his audience. The teacher must teach that the purpose of language is communication and that anything in a speaker's habits which interferes with this process is an impediment and therefore, undesirable.

He must realize, when he teaches this concept, that speech which is so "correct" and precise that people give more attention to the manner in which something is said than they do to what is being said impedes communication. Usage levels must adjust to circumstance; at times a speaker can be too correct.

Let teachers be wary of classifying levels of usage. It is difficult to know a phrase is standard, sub-standard, or illiterate. Locutions tend to find their own level, and most students learn usage from experiences outside the schoolroom; there is really little need for the teacher to re-affirm what the student already knows. The teacher might ask the student to be alert to levels and to make his own judgments about what language patterns fit where.

One method the teacher can use to reinforce the student's awareness of levels is to be sure to state the audience for any writing or speaking assignment. He might ask a class to write the same instructions several times, changing the audience with each re-writing and noting language changes. Role-playing oral assignments can force the student to adjust his speech patterns to fit a particular social or scholastic level. If the student is encouraged to note the way language matches circumstance in ordinary life, the teacher will have started an education process that can continue well past the student's formal training.

Do we laugh at some expressions or pronounciations we hear from some of our students? Sometimes students laugh at teachers and at each other for like reasons. Unexpected or unusual terms cause amusement when we are provoked by unusual construction, unintentional pun, or mispronounciation. This laughter can be the jumping-off point for lively discussions of why we find the expression humorous. From this point the teacher may make related assignments. In one class session a student stated that someone had "cabbaged onto" his pencil. He explained that this meant that someone had taken it but that "to cabbage" was not the same as "to steal"; "cabbaging" was more like borrowing without permission. This led to talk about the use of the word "cabbage" for money, the origin of the word, the redundancy of "a head of cabbage," the reason Americans do not pronounce "garage" as the British do, the meaning of "cabbages and kings," and the study of nonsense verse. That language is continuously changing makes language teaching more challenging and more fun.

Despite those who sneer at education courses, motivation is still the name of the educational game, and the

best teacher cannot teach students he has alienated because of language differences or the teacher's attitudes toward these differences. Teachers turn off too many students. Perhaps the way to bring back some of the enthusiasm--which all of them bring to their early school years, but which most of them lose--is for teachers to explore language with students rather than to become supreme courts of language from which there is no appeal.

Teachers must take the concept of right and wrong out of language study, stop treating language as an inviolate, area of absolutes, stop allowing personal linguistic prejudices to color their objectivity, make the student aware of the need for adjusting language to circumstance and audience, stress the practicality of language rather than its esthetic value, and create in the student a curiosity about language which will stay with him past his formal schooling. If teachers accomplish these goals, perhaps the budding poet will not have to trade his "fire for form till he is cold." He will have both "fire and form."

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In Peristylo Proprio

Teachers fail to use the material around them. To compete with teaching devices which vary from the comic books to bumper stickers, they must take advantage of the programmed resource that walks into our classrooms with every child who enters. To sum up these ideas, I asked our Latin teacher to dignify this paper with a title. The words really mean "Right in Our Own Backyards."

We overlook the wealth of information we can gain in other departments of our schools. Of course we know that English is the most important subject any student studies, but what is going on in the history department that we can use? What is happening in the science laboratories that will enrich the teaching of English? Do you mosey into the music room when you want help with ballads or lyrics? The art department simply bulges with ideas we can use. My students love to sketch horrendous likenesses of Grendel and

do collages of the Canterbury Pilgrims. I cannot teach Faulkner's "Barn Burning" without the marvelous group portrait one of my students painted of the Snopes family. Dr. Henry Sweet, Jr., once said, "Language is the noise we make with our faces, not the scratches we make with our fists." Do we make enough use of oral language? Do we show our students what a miracle language really is?

Sometimes intellectual curiosity lies dormant on top of the television set. Arousing curiosity about word origins stimulates students interest in language. Language is personal, and one of the most personal aspects of language lies in personal names. Do your students know the meaning of their names? They are fascinated to learn that their names do have meanings. Sometimes they are startled to learn why names are referred to as Christian or Baptismal names.

For example, Robert means bright and beautiful; Fred stands for a good counselor; William signifies a helmet of resolution, while Dorothy refers to a gift of God as does the name Matthew. Anne presents a variation of Hannah which means grace. Susan is "Fair as the lily." Alexander denotes a defender of men; Sandra echoes the name in feminine form. Linda indicates beauty. Catherine, Kathy, Kate all signal the good. Peter means rock. Stephen designates a crown. Debby refers to the bee, and Melissa is a Greek word for honey. Julia means soft-haired. Manly is the word for Mark.

Students become intrigued with the study of surnames. The occupations of their ancestors cause them to wonder. Sometimes they have not realized that the Mac- and Mc- prefixes and the -son or -sen suffixes really stood for something. All of our class enrollments carry the names Miller, Smith, Johnson; some of us boast DeBonville, Gackenheimer, Renbarger, Vandegrift. Students enjoy translating their names. Any number of books deal with names alone, and some dictionaries carry sections on names, so the information is not difficult to find. Go to your foreign language departments for help in this study; students may even be encouraged to study other languages. Names are interesting topics for writing. "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary" and "What's in a Name?" were titles for two such themes in my classes.

Communities are storehouses of information concerning names. How did your town get its name? How did your county, the streets of your town, your school, your athletic team get their names? Many of our communities owe

their names to Indian lore. Wabash is Ouaboukigou in the Miami tongue and "place of the shining water." French voyageurs who paddled their canoes from Vincennes to the portages near Fort Detroit shortened the name of the river to Oubache. The French were the first to put the name in writing, so Wabash is actually the English pronunciation of the French word. On their way to school, most of our students cross Charley Creek; but few of them realize it was named for Charley, the Indian chief who owned much of the land where our town stands. Treaty Creek, where generations of our young people learned to swim and to fish, honors a treaty signed on its banks by the first white settlers. Eel River seems such an uncomplicated sound for Kennipokomoko, the Indian name for the stream which winds like an eel through our county. The nearby town Lagro recalls the corpulent Indian chief who ruled the area; the French called him Le Gros. Not too far away is Waupecong; isn't that a pleasant sound for an Indian phrase meaning pleasant valley?

The very sounds of Indian words are wonderful. Some rainy Monday morning give your students a list of Indian words to chant. You will be surprised to find how this stirs things up!

> Wampum, wigwam; hickory, hominy, moccasin, mackinaw.
> Caribou, caucus; papoose, persimmon; chipmunk, skunk.
> Potato, tomato; totem, terripan; succotash, squash.
> Tomahawk, tepee; Pocahontas, pampas; racoon, hawk.

Light dawns on students' faces when they begin to think about the origins of the names of our streets. Our principal thoroughfares happen to be named for adjacent counties. To the east of Wabash Street lie Huntington and Allen; to the west run Miami, Cass, and Carroll. The kids get tickled when they realize that Hill Street crowns the crest of our hills and Water Street lies near the river. Some student always comes forth with the information that where two of our shortest streets intersect, the signs read "Daniel" and"Webster."

Eclectic architecture that fills most of our Middle Western towns offers a wealth of teaching material. Rose windows, Gothic spires, various orders of Greek columns, crenulated towers, Mansard roofs--all these abound in our communities.

Church windows provide a point of departure for the study of symbolism. The Lion of St. Mark, the Winged Man of St. Matthew, the Ox of St. Luke, and the Eagle of

St. John are often pictured. Depicted, too, are the Tablets of Moses, the Alpha and the Omega, the grapes and the wheat of the Eucharist.

The names schools choose for their athletic teams also invite the study of symbolism. One has only to mention such names as the Apaches, the Vikings, the Giants, the Tigers. What do you suppose might happen to teams called the Pygmies or the Kittens?

Students are not much interested in anything they cannot relate to their own lives. With the current vogue for astrology, they have taken the Zodiac for their own. "The Age of Aquarius" has roused a great many slumbering symbols for our students. Indeed, in teaching Romeo and Juliet today, the phrase "the star-crossed lovers" needs no explication.

Even the great queen, Elizabeth, seems more real to students because the very sword with which she knighted Sir Francis Drake was used by the present Queen to knight Sir Francis Chichester when he completed his voyage around the world. Certainly the first Queen Elizabeth with those eighty-seven red wigs of hers seems a real person to those girls who come into our classes wearing wigs!

In this day of the mini-skirt and the maxi-coat we miss opportunities to teach the pre-fix and the suffix if we overlook such matters.

Origins of clothing names fascinate students. They remember the Nehru jacket. They wear fisherman knits, but do they know that each pattern originally designated a different village or family? They like cardigans, so they may be interested in learning that the sweater took its name from the Earl of Cardigan. Our young people live in levis; some of them do not know their favorite garments were first made by Levi Strauss. During the Gold Rush, Strauss took bolts of the material to California, intending to use it for making tents. Instead he made sturdy pants that did not pick up burrs and brambles. When prospectors attempted to carry heavy rocks and nuggets in their pockets, stitches ripped; so Levi strengthened the pockets by rivetting them to the pants. When only our seniors wore corduroys, they were impressed to know that the very name of the fabric meant corded velvet of the king--corde du roi. Students do not forget the raglan sleeve if they know it was designed so General Raglan could wear his greatcoat over his epaulets. In the past several years our boys have shown great interest in General A. E. Burnside who

inaugurated one of their favored fashions, the elaborate sideburn, more than one hundred years ago.

Students who belong to 4-H are wonderful resource persons. Let them share their knowledge of names. They know the origin of such terms as Shetland ponies, Durham cattle, Hampshire hogs, Chester white hogs, Shropshire sheep (and Shropshire Lads, we hope). They could tell about African violets, Lima Beans, Kaffir corn, Bramha cattle. They could explain why we speak of Jersey, Guernsey, Holstein, Brown Swiss cattle. The small son of a young friend of mine has a marvelous ear for language; he came home from our 4-H Fair and reported seeing great big Black Angus in the cattle show.

We could ensnare the girls in home economics section in a study of language that has to do with fabric. Denim derives from cloth du Nimes; gingham is Malaysian for checkered while chintz is Hindustani for bright-colored. Damask originated in Damascus; calico, in Calcutta.

Perhaps we could add to the enjoyment of young botanists if we tell them that tulip comes from an old Persian word meaning turban and pansy comes from the French word pense meaning thoughtful. They may know that the dahlia, the forsythia, and the poinsettia are names for persons.

Boys become involved in a discussion of the names of cars. Older makes and models evoked the names of explorers such as Cadillac, Desoto, Bonneville. Now names emphasize the connotations of power and speed with the use of such terms as Impala, Thunderbird, Falcon, Mustang, Jaguar, and Cougar. Ask them the origin of the term jeep; they will be intrigued if they do not already know.

All students always take part in a discussion of food names. They may not be aware that one of the principal staples of their diet obtained its name from a gambler, the Earl of Sandwich; they may not know that another of their staffs of life took its name from the German seaport, Hamburg. With a little encouragement they will compile lists of interesting food names.

Students themselves sense a great deal about language if only we give them the opportunity. Not long ago one of my students was explaining the term mags to me.

"That's a strange thing," he said. "They are no longer made of magnesium; they are made of aluminum, but we still call them mags."

Do you ever talk about the ice-box? Do you remember the older ladies who always referred to "silk" hose long

after the synthetics had taken over?

After lunch the other day, one of my girls repeated, "Mother. Mama. Mom. Mere. Mater. Mamma Mia. Why all those names begin with M, no matter what the language. Bet that is one of the first sounds a baby makes. Women are pretty smart to make the most of that sound, aren't they?"

Newcomers to our schools prove to be wonderful assets in the study of language. Students who transfer from other parts of the country quickly notice unusual elements in speech, and exchange students from foreign countries can give new insights into language to our own pupils. Discussion of language differences serves a dual purpose. It makes the new student feel more at home, and it demonstrates unusual facets of usage.

Hoosier students find it astonishing to learn that they have accents. Such a thing has never occured to most of them. We all think that dialect is characteristic of the speech of other people! Our students learn that students from the South merely mean "Hi," when they say "Hey." And our students are amazed that they have to translate such Hoosier expressions as "Wait on me!" and "I want out" or "I want in." Our colloquilisms delighted Noel, one of our foreign exchange students who spoke British English. His favorite was "anymore." Noel's American brother made constant use of such expressions as, "I do not like that anymore." One of our students who had great difficulty with a French r found consolation in the fact that our popular Japanese student could not make some of our sounds. He made straight A's because he studied so "rong in our ribrary."

Students appreciate what a very personal thing language can be when they analyze usages within their own homes. One year I had twin brothers as students in two different classes. They used the expression "to take for granite"; then I discovered the whole family used the expression. Twice this week students have reported hearing, "He had to bear the blunt." The descendents of Mrs. Malaprop are alive and well and enrolled in all our schools.

Of all the resources we have, the very greatest resource is the students' own experience. Many times young people think their lives are unimportant and meaningless. They feel their lives are too dull to use as subject material for writing. Nothing could be more remote from the truth. Ideas for making use of this resource come to us from many places. Talking with other teachers, attending professional meetings, sharing ideas with teachers from

different schools--all these increase our skill in motivating the writing of our students.

One very interesting idea from the committee on composition from Indiana University suggested that students write descriptions of their homes with such accuracy that a stranger would recognize the area. After the students wrote descriptions of the external appearance of their neighborhoods, they were to write another paper telling what the neighborhood really meant to them as individuals. The first themes were very good; the second, splendid. One student wrote,

> It suddenly occurs to me that I have learned all the good things and all the sad things in life right here in this half-block.

Two aspects of the same thing always provide fine topics. One football player, Fred Prickett, covered a game as it appeared to a sports writer; then he wrote another account that explored the feelings of the players. One actually felt the terrible tenseness in the locker room as each player sought to conceal that tenseness. Several times during the year, the local dancing group presents programs. Several girls wrote of the ballet as it appears to the spectators--all white tulle, airy grace, and satin slippers; then they wrote accounts of the gruelling rehearsals and the aching muscles.

Our students should welcome the opportunity to write about their experiences. Willa Cather wrote, "Writing is remembering." When we remember this definition, we can call forth the best from our classes. Oh, they like to write about Shanghai nights and jewel thieves in Rio, but let us English teachers recall all those words we say in praise of verisimilitude. At this very moment, our own students are the authorities on the subject of young people.

Students write best about the things they know best. Joan wrote of all the effort she made to impress a boy on her first date with him. She washed and ironed the right dress; she cleaned her white shoes, she spent hours on her hair and almost as much time making up her eyes; then it started raining and her Lochinvar called for her on his motorcycle.

Rain also figured in Mike's marvelous account of last year's Prom. Ordinarilly Mike wears bleached levis, sneakers, and a sweater. It took his whole family most of the day to get him ready, complete with cummerbund, for the

dance; then it was discovered that Mike had outgrown his shoes. Finally he limped up the steps to his girl's house in brand new shoes, shoes so stiff he could scarcely walk. His date met him in tears. She had spent the afternoon at the beauty parlor getting her hair all whooped up; it rained and her hair promptly fell down. Together those two forlorn kids went to the party and had the best time of any couple there.

One of the most touching things I have ever read was the tribute Doug wrote about his grandfather. The death of a battle-scarred old dog was the subject of another outstanding paper. Still another described the student's little sister. Students can write about little children, pets, and old people as no other writers can.

Have you ever tossed out words and let the students write random associated ideas? They are always astonished and pleased with their own results. Do you ever have your students bring their favorite records and suggest they write as they listen? You'll be surprised at the things Donovan, Simon and Garfunkle, and Rod McKuen help them express.

We should pay more attention to the process of writing. So often we are concerned only with the end product. Give students the opportunity to talk about the things they are to write about. A great deal of talking is simply thinking aloud. We clarify and crystallize our thoughts in the process of writing. After your students finish their papers, let them read each other's work. Our classes break up into groups of four or five to read and to evaluate one another's compositions. Students write much more carefully if their efforts are to be shared with their peers. On any assignment we have, however, a student may reserve the right to have only the teacher see his theme. Frequently the most important obligation an English teacher has is to read something a student is not able to verbalize. He can write it down, but he cannot say what is on his mind. Indeed, James Moffett in his book, A Student Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13, emphasizes the fact that writing is a spiritual exercise.

As English teachers we must capitalize on everything. Our classes drew parallels between Easy Riderand such works as The Odyssey, Beowulf, and The Hobbit. (We even used Easy Rider to discuss the word origin of Mardi Gras and Carnival.) The TV showing of the film El Cid prompted the examination of Paddy Chayefsky's essays on writing for television production; students objected to all those armies

crowding into their living rooms. One section has finished reading some short stories. Now those students are scanning issues of The New York Times in search of headlines to inspire some original short stories; other students are using cartoons from The New Yorker as their subjects. Still others are collecting Anne Landers' letters as source material! Movies, television, newspapers, magazines--make use of all of them.

Even in this day of the computer, if we are involved with education, we somehow always return to the classics. I began with reference to Latin, and I must finish with reference to Greek. Our Advanced Placement Section has been exploring philosophical ideas. Those seniors agree that Socrates' "Know Thyself" is "pretty sharp" advice, and they have almost come to terms with his idea that the unexamined life is not worth living.

With young people we have an opportunity to prove to each student that he does have something of interest to offer. By encouraging students to look into their own lives and to write about the things they know, we can help each student realize his importance as an individual; we can help each one know himself.

By making use of all the resources we have, we can help our students realize that language came into existence because of man's need to communicate ideas--language is the sound we make with our faces but it is also the squiggles we make with our fists. We can help them realize that no matter what wonderful ideas we have, those ideas are useless unless we share them. How successful we are in relating to other human beings depends largely upon our ability to use language.

Language is a tool, a skill, and a very personal art. Language is one of our greatest treasures, for it is the means by which we communicate with other human beings. Let us make use of every one of the resources in peristylo proprio to arouse our students' interest in their language heritage.